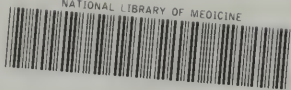


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Premature Baldness.

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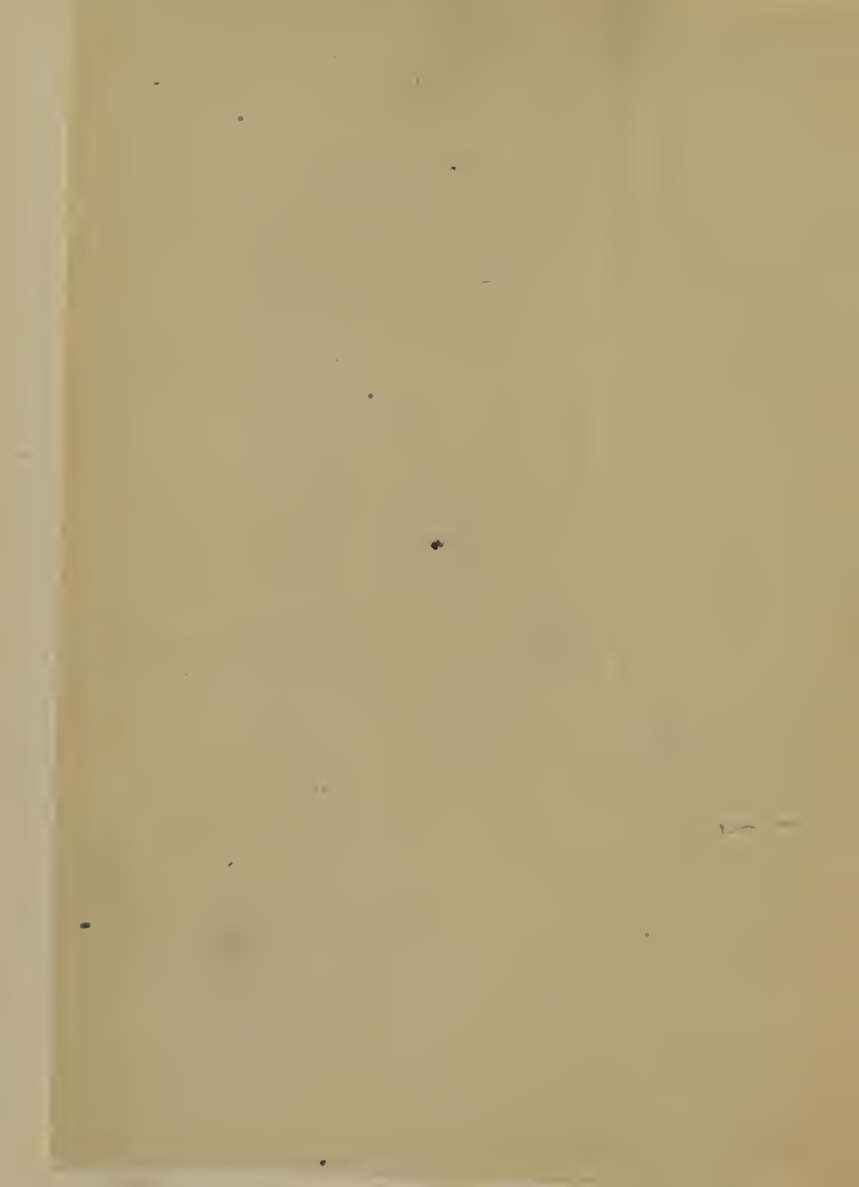








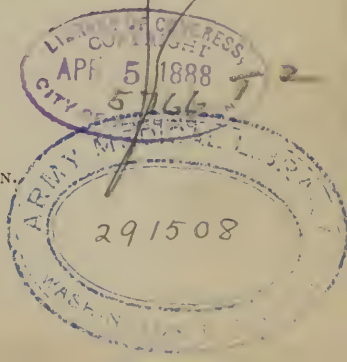






THE CUSTOMARY  
TREATMENT OF THE HAIR  
CONSIDERED IN RELATION  
TO THE  
REMARKABLE PREVALENCE  
OF  
PREMATURE BALDNESS.  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES.

— — — — —  
SAINT LOUIS:  
PUBLISHED BY ARTHUR R. DEACON.  
1888.



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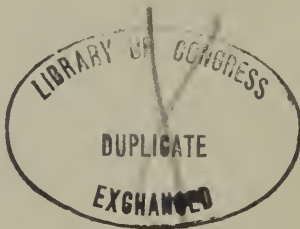
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## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

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SEVERAL years ago, the publisher of this little work, being engaged in mining operations in one of our Western States, was thrown much in company with an English gentleman, who, as a practical geologist and chemist, was in part investigating some mining property in which a British syndicate was largely interested, and in part enjoying a much-needed vacation. The isolated situation of our mining camp favored the rapid growth of our friendship, and I soon discovered my companion to be an earnest and enthusiastic student of natural phenomena, and possessed with an irresistible tendency to radically exhaust the "why and wherefore" of any singular condition that might attract his attention or be called to his notice. I was especially impressed with his vehement condemnation of the abusive treatment to which "Americans" subject the hair—expatiating upon the number of prematurely bald heads he had observed in the Eastern States as an alarming and most unnecessary condition, and

explaining in so lucid and emphatic a manner the reason or prime cause of the peculiarity and the best methods for its prevention and relief, that I earnestly endeavored to induce him to give his views publicity in book form or through the pages of some scientific or medical publication; but he declared he had neither time nor inclination to mar his vacation with any such project, but awaiting a more suitable occasion I have induced him to write this little work, which I present with great confidence for the consideration of a most discriminating people.

A. R. DEACON.

SAINT LOUIS, March 1st, 1888.

## PREMATURE BALDNESS.

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LONDON, November 7th, 1887.

MY DEAR SIR:—Your very flattering letter of the 20th ultimo arrived safely, and although I fear you may over-value the importance of my views, I gladly write for you a resume of my observations and inquiries, which enabled me to arrive at a (to me) very satisfactory conclusion regarding the cause of the prevalence of premature baldness among the male population of the States. As I analyze the reminiscences of my sojourn in your favored country, I find that my attention was more quickly drawn to and concentrated upon the peculiarities thereof—natural or personal—than upon its marvelous growth, progress or prosperity; anything purely and thoroughly American being of immediate and paramount interest, hence I had been present at very few of your places of assembly, etc., ere my curiosity was painfully excited to learn the cause of the great per centage of comparatively youthful heads presenting unequivocal evidence of approaching baldness. A very limited research convinced me that the disease was a *national one*, attributable to specific cause, and I re-

doubled my efforts in seeking information. Through the medical journals, by personal inquiry, and microscopical examination of the hair and scalp whenever I could obtain an opportunity. The result was, a list of notes, theories and hypotheses so voluminous and conflicting as to render them worthless as evidence, and I fear my labor would remain unrewarded had it not been my good fortune to enjoy a rather extended tour over your country, and to become very well informed regarding the conditions of the various communities, and especially well acquainted with that

unique individual—the American hairdresser—  
**Prime Cause.** and his barbarous methods, which are undoubtedly largely responsible for the prevalence of premature baldness in your country. A conclusion I arrive at through a consideration of the following conditions: In

the large cities of the United States are to be  
**Evidence.** found a greater per centage of prematurely bald heads than in any nation upon the globe. This condition is not equally distributed amongst the population, but increases in direct ratio with the particularity of the individual to his personal appearance and his obedience to the dictum of fashion, the largest number of cases being found amongst the more fashionable of the professional and business men, but closely followed by the better class of mechanics and craftsmen, notably printers, electrotypers, machinists, and those whose business calling requires the performance of "dirty work," yet whose social position demands a comparatively exact personal appearance outside of the work-shop. As a class, may next be considered

the city laborer, porter, teamster, janitor, and the like, with which may be incorporated the agriculturist, as occupations that do not require a very strict attention to the toilet; and amongst them premature loss of hair is uncommon, and *very far* from being a prevalent condition, whilst amongst the lower strata of society, itinerants, vagrants, etc., a bald spot upon the head of a man of less than fifty years of age is of very rare occurrence.

The beard has the advantage of being some twenty years younger than the hair of the head, is more deeply rooted, usually of coarser texture, and its position favoring drainage rather than absorption, it is not so susceptible to the deleterious influences of irritating or destructive applications; but that it can be injured by the customary methods of abuse is pretty clearly proven in the individual who allows the hair to grow on only part of the face up to the prime of life and then cultivates a full beard. The new portion being almost invariably besprinkled with gray or discolored hairs, although the original parts still maintain the color of his youth. The hair constituting the eye-lashes and eye-brows is of an entirely different structure, and not germane to the present subject; but should more evidence be required to demonstrate that premature baldness increases in exact ratio with the amount of *soap* and foreign substances applied to the hair and scalp, and that

**Superior Intel-** the affection is not superinduced by a condition of superior intelligence or sedentary and enfeebling occupations, we can depart for a moment from the consideration of the disease as it affects the male pop-

**ligence.**

ulation and review the status of the hair in **Woman's Hair.** women. Here we find baldness, at any age, almost unknown, unless created by specific disease, thanks to the abundance of hair, which renders the neutralization and extraction of the natural oil quite difficult, and to the somewhat troublesome nature of the operation of washing and drying, which tends to restrict the enjoyment of ablutions to such as are necessary to maintain comparative cleanliness.

**A Bad Outlook.**

I congratulate myself upon writing in the present era, for the existing fashion of cutting, curling and twisting the hair over the forehead cannot but eventually result most disastrously to the "beautiful tresses." I still further digress to advise any chance lady reader to examine carefully this portion of the hair, and compare the number of dead or discolored hair-plants with those on that part of the head which is not subjected to the daily ordeal of curling, burning, etc., and adopt in time measures to prevent further destruction.

**Superfluous  
Hair.**

The resisting power of the hair follicle and its contents against the absorption of foreign matter is great, and it is an operation requiring both skill and patience to effectually remove a superfluous hair\* with either acid or alkaline caustics, repeated applications being generally necessary to accomplish the desired result but with sufficient patience and care the objectionable

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\* To a St. Louis physician belongs the credit of the practical application of electrosis for the removal of hair.



**Strong Affinity.** hair-plant can invariably be eradicated. The requisite chemicals, however, would prove dangerous in the hands of those unacquainted with their properties and tendency to produce untoward effects. Yet, practically, these same chemicals, which are so rapidly destructive to the hair-plant, are habitually used, diluted and admixed to form what are popularly known as hair tonics, stimulants and detergents, and whilst their diluents render their action slow or perhaps imperceptible, their effect is the same, but modified, and it simply requires a sufficient time and quantity to show their injurious effect, as the continuous application to the hair and scalp of *any* substance antagonistic to its natural pabulum and the oil secreted for its nourishment and protection by the sebaceous glands, will universally cause loss of hair. The most dangerous application,

**Shampoo.** because by far the most frequently used, are the alkaline shampooing mixtures of potash, soda and ammonia, which neutralize and extract the natural oil, rendering the hair-plant dry and capable of absorbing the foreign substance, which gradually overcomes the resisting tendencies of the oil and is carried into the follicle, causing irritation and dryness of the scalp

**Dandruff.** and its concomitant exfoliation—dandruff,\* and eventually killing the hair papilla and atrophying the follicle. Although the employment of that very necessary article—soap—is not nearly so de-

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\* The word "dandruff" I use to indicate the dry, fluffy exfoliations of the scalp; *not* the dried, oily excretions of the sebaceous glands, which arise from a totally different cause.

structive as the above, it necessarily contains a more or less powerful alkali that is not wholly neutralized by its oleaginous affinity, and correspondingly detrimental to the hair structure.

I do not wish to be construed as seeking to depreciate the desirability of saponaceous ablutions, and only desire that it be borne in mind that the familiar toilet and household article is an artificial compound, foreign to the absolute requirements of nature, and capable of abuse and harmful results.

**Shingling.** Cutting the hair very short, within a quarter, a half or an inch from the scalp, especially at back part of the head, is doubtless a comfortable fashion during your very warm summer months, but it cannot fail to be detrimental, in so far as it invites the free and frequent application of water at the toilet and facilitates the drying of the natural oil; fortunately, the occipital and temporal portion of the head is not so readily affected by the various alkaline, saponaceous or alcoholic applications, owing to the tendency of the hair to drain off any substance that may be applied. The upper part of the scalp does not enjoy this advantage, but, on the contrary, holds any substance that may be applied in excellent condition for rapid absorption by the hair and scalp, and the crown of the head suffers correspondingly. Here the comb is also frequently responsible for assistance in the work of destruction, scratching and abrading this part of the scalp, while it glides smoothly over the back and sides of the head.

My observations do not lead me to believe that the frequent cutting, nor the length the hair is worn, exercise any material influence upon its welfare in a primary sense, yet, if we did not interfere with the object of nature, and allowed the hair to follow its inclination untrammelled, the back of the head and neck would be the most protected part of the body, whereas it now is the part most severely exposed.

**A Query.**

Was it the purpose of Mother Nature to thus employ the hair as a protection to the delicate membranes of the respiratory passages and nasal fossæ? Is it possible that the severe abuse it is thus subjected to, coupled with a great range in climatic temperature, has any bearing upon the etiology of what Dickens has described as "*The Great American Catarrh*?"

**Laryngologists.**

But these are questions for the consideration of your accomplished laryngologists, and far beyond the scope of this little review.

**The American  
Hair Dresser.**

These pages represent a very fair synopsis of my observations bearing upon the cause of the subject under consideration, yet I cannot refrain from devoting a few lines to the "American Hair Dresser"—the "Tonsorial Artist"—he of the red, white and blue stripes! Truly, he is a right comfortable fellow to be referred to during a warm summer day. His towels are cleanly and plentiful, his chair luxurious, his touch gentle, his bay essence refreshing, his shampoo effectual—very effectual! He has arisen high in his calling, and that he is appreciated, witness the number of shops and the rows of

chairs they contain, which, at regular hours, are filled with individuals awaiting patiently, anxiously or nonchalantly the operator's cry of "Next." "Next victim" would be a more suitable exclamation, when we examine the treatment the delicate hair-plant usually undergoes, in the absence of any instructions from the "victim" in the chair.

First, the back and sides of the head are shorn almost to the skin; then a species of curry-combing with the officinal brush, that brings tears to the eyes; next a deluge of an aqueous solution of potassium carbonate, or shampoo mixture, which is rubbed ferociously to the roots of the hair; then a water bath, and finally a free application of bay rum, and perhaps an offer of "a little oil, sir?" which is usually rejected; the operation is completed, and the individual, satisfied that his hair is *a la mode*, deposits his fee and departs, feeling refreshed and satisfied. But what does "nature" say to this application of powerful substances, foreign to the pabulum vitæ of the hair? If she is unable to secrete sufficient oil to render the applications uninjurious, the hair becomes dry and fluffy—*absorbent*, the scalp dry and harsh—"chapped." Exfoliation begins—*dandruff*—and under heroic treatment as a specific disease, instead of a symptom of "abusive care," is soon augmented into a most troublesome affection, and the individual becomes a patient of his hair dresser, and is advised to purchase a very stiff hairbrush or a fine-calibre comb (with which to further excite the already irritated scalp), to be frequently sham-

pooed, and fortunate, indeed, is he that escapes the recommendation of some wonderful hair wash or restorer.

**The Unavoidable Result.** This course of *stimulating* treatment simply intensifies the existing conditions, and results unavoidably in the loss to complete destruction of the hair. Verdict: Died of too much kind attention.

It is not the purpose of this letter to treat upon the various diseases of the scalp, whether caused by systemic conditions, contagium or neglect; nor do I here propose to pursue any symptom of abusive treatment through its metamorphosis to a normal status, or its degeneracy into a specific disease; but simply to confine my object to the elucidation of the prime cause of the prevalence of premature baldness. In this connection, however, it may be advisable to enlarge upon the chemical action and therapy of the compounds in common use as applications to the hair and scalp, and to which I have briefly alluded in the preceding pages.

**The Alkalies.** Potash, soda and ammonia, in strong form, are virulent caustics, rapidly destructive to animal tissue; diluted to meet the requirements of an effectual shampoo, they combine with and change the natural pabulum of the hair, and are injurious in direct ratio to their strength and to the frequency and persistency of their application.

**Shampoo Mixtures.** The number of shampooing compounds is legion, but the following may be taken as a type:

Alcohol and water, of each a pint; ammonia water and cologne, of each an ounce. Mix.

Or, carbonate of potash, one ounce; carbonate of ammonia, a half ounce; alcohol and water, each one pint. Mix.

**Combined Shampoo and "Tonic."** Tincture of cantharides and tincture of capsicum, of each a half ounce; carbonate of ammonia and borax, each an ounce; bay rum, two pints; water, one pint. Mix.

Although, hair dressers are not usually over-particular in relation to quantity, frequently simply dissolving about an ounce of carbonate of potash in a pint of water and adding a few drops of bergamot or other essence to perfume.

**Soda and Potash Soaps.** These alkalies, particularly potash and soda, combine readily with the stearin, palmitin and olein of animal and vegetable fats, forming the familiar product known as soap, liberating, during the process, a sweet substance—glycerine. I recall an impromptu "lecture" upon soap, made by an old friend and fellow-student whilst several companions were congregated in our common wash-room, vainly endeavoring to induce a little lather from a sample of that species of waxey soap which we still occasionally encounter in economically-administered hotels, etc. (Its relation may here serve a useful purpose):

"GENTLEMEN —A combination of potash and fat rich in olein (lard) forms a *soft soap*, readily soluble and powerfully detergent, suitable for rough cleaning about the household. Common yellow hard soap is also a very strong article; soda is the alkali employed in the manufacture of

this soap. Olive oil and soda enable us to rejoice in such products as castile soap ; but when we utilize soda in company with fats rich in stearin (tallow, etc.) we obtain a soap exemplified in this article [holding up the waxey cake]. This, then, we may term a stearate of soda—pardon the observation—but if a steer-ate of so da—ably insoluble stuff, he would become s-olein——” If I remember correctly, the sentence was not completed.

**Irritant Poisons.** Cantharides, or Spanish flies, is probably more frequently used as an ingredient of “hair tonics,” etc., than any other one drug. It is a most virulent poison of a peculiarly irritating nature ; a highly valued vesicant or producer of blisters ; diluted, it is termed a “stimulant” or “tonic.” That such an agent may be extremely valuable in counteracting disease, is obviously true ; but its reputed value as a “stimulant” or “tonic” to the hair, I have been unable to admit theoretically or corroborate by practice. Applied to the epidermis, cantharides quickly raises a blister—a bladder-like excrescence, filled with a watery serum. This is a beautifully illustrative and effective effort on the part of Mother Nature to prevent the entrance of the poisonous and irritating drug into the system, by raising the cuticle by a supply of watery matter, which receives the amount of drug absorbed and holds it for such gradual absorption by the deeper tissues that its power for evil results are materially lessened. When nature gives such a clearly defined lesson, it cannot be disregarded with impunity. Cantharides, then, should *never* be employed other than to produce

**Blistering Testimony.**

a *known* and *exact* effect. This sentence applies almost equally well to the many other drugs and chemicals recommended as hair tonics, stimulants, etc., and, if conscientiously carried out, the hair will be safe and the knowledge of drug action improved.

To Maintain  
Cleanliness.

The hair and scalp should not be washed oftener than is necessary to maintain cleanliness. In occupations that make it desirable to do so, a cap or light hat should be worn to occlude the dust and dirt. Exercise special care in the selection of a mild soap. There are many excellent articles upon the market, but for general recommendation nothing excels the White Spanish Castile, which contains the least quantity of alkali compatible with utility, and, being manufactured where olive oil is plentiful, it enjoys an excellent reputation for purity. Rinse the hair with clear soft water (at blood heat) until the soap is effectually removed. Take up the surplus water with a towel, but before quite dry rub gently to the hair and scalp a sweet vegetable or animal oil, *A Quid Pro Quo*. AND NOTHING ELSE, thus returning as equally as possible an equivalent to the natural oil extracted in the washing process. If oil be thus employed faithfully, in quantities REQUISITE but not EXCESSIVE, it will preserve the hair in its proper hygienic condition and enable it to sustain the loss of *natural pabulum* induced by the custom of wearing short hair—such as drying of the oil by the air and sun, friction with the pillow at night, and contact with the hat-band, chair-back, etc., by day. The quantity of oil re-



**A Necessary Quantity.** required and the frequency of application can only be determined by individual observation.

Where the hair is luxuriant and secretions abundant, very little will suffice ; but where the hair is fine and dry, a small quantity applied daily will be found desirable. If the head

**Alopecia.** presents signs of approaching baldness, oil should be applied more freely—gently applied—and in cases which are more pronounced, the hair and scalp should be soaked with oil at night, an oiled silk or other cap being worn to prevent soiling the linen and to protect the feeble hair-shafts from friction with the pillow. Remove excess of oil in the morning with a soft napkin, washing the head not oftener than once a month.

**Oleaginous Correctives.** The selection of a suitable oil is a matter of no small importance, for if it be not in convenient form and pleasant, it will not be CUSTOMARILY employed. There are excellently prepared preparations of petroleum upon the market, which may serve the purpose very well, although I incline to the belief that some of the animal or vegetable oils are more readily absorbed.

The following formula I am accustomed to recommend, as meeting all requirements :

Beef Marrow (free from albumen)* . . . . .	1 pound
Olive Oil . . . . .	6 ounces.
Beeswax . . . . .	6 drachms.
Palm Oil . . . . .	1 ounce.

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\* To coagulate and separate any albuminous matter from the beef marrow, it should be boiled with water and strained while hot. When cool, the marrow can be easily removed from surface of the water.

Melt together with the aid of a gentle heat; and add oil of bergamot and oil of lemon, of each a drachm; oil of cloves and oil of cassia, of each fifteen drops. The quantity of beeswax should be slightly increased during very warm weather, and reduced or omitted entirely during the winter months.

This combination of essential oils gives a very agreeable odor, not too pronounced, and, possessing antiseptic properties, tends to retard any rancidity. When beef marrow cannot be obtained, lard would be the best *substitute*.

For the sake of variety, I will give another formula, for an excellent and very sightly pomade:

Spermaceti . . . . .	2 ounces.
Castor Oil . . . . .	6 ounces.
Sweet Almond Oil . . . . .	6 ounces.

Melt the spermaceti over a water-bath, stirring only sufficiently to mix it with the oils; then add oil of allspice and cloves, of each twelve drops; oil of bergamot and otto of roses, of each twenty drops.

#### OINTMENT OF ROSE WATER OR COLD CREAM.

White Wax . . . . .	1 ounce and 6 drachms.
Sweet Almond Oil . . . . .	6 ounces.

Melt, and add gradually, rose water one ounce; beat until cold; while cooling, add twelve drops otto of roses.

After shaving—and the application of bay rum, when this article is used—rub a small quantity vigorously to the face; remove it with a soft towel; then a little powder,

if the "shine" is objectionable, and the face will be in a delightfully smooth and comfortable condition. The irritation from the soap and bay rum is counteracted and pustular eruption very generally prevented. This measure needs to be but tried to be universally adopted.

NOTE.—Bay rum serves a good purpose as an antiseptic, rendering harmless any unhealthy secretions of the skin that the razor may liberate and carry over the surface of the face, but it is sufficiently powerful to excite troublesome irritation if not employed *moderately*.

**Suitable Implements.**

In the selection of a comb, choose an article possessing a moderately thin tooth, smooth finish, and not so sharply pointed that it will abrade the scalp. In material, bone is to be preferred to hard rubber in some instances, as not so readily exciting an electric condition of the hair, but in finish the former is not generally so perfect as the latter. The scalp is often irritated by too frequent and persistent combing. Comb the hair—*don't* comb the scalp.

A MODERATELY stiff hair-brush, dimensions about five inches long by two and a half wide, with bristles three-fourths of an inch long at outer edges, rising to an inch in length in the center, will be found most serviceable and effective. White bristles are to be preferred, as more quickly indicating the hygienic state of the brush, which should be *kept clean*, and for this purpose nothing is better than a small quantity of alkali—preferably ammonia water—added to the water in which the brush is washed, which will also serve to indicate the facility with which these substances can remove the pabulum of the hair-plant.

Magnified Dan-  
ger.

A portion of debris taken from a neglected hair-brush reveals under the microscope a conglomeration of pus, dried blood, lymph, grease and foreign detritus quite sufficient to sustain the assertion that the hair-brush may prove a common carrier of contagion.

A Golden Op-  
portunity.

I sincerely trust that you will not be disappointed in that I have not a wonderful new medicine or complicated prescription for the infallible cure of every degree of baldness. Truly, our constant flood of new remedies and voluminous list of officinal medicaments offer a golden opportunity to concoct mixtures of marvelously intricate composition, but therapeutically—what?

Ancient History.

Ancient writings testify or frequently refer to the value and high estimation in which “anointing with oil” was held; and the “Noble Romans” thoroughly appreciated the necessity of rubbing with “perfumed oil” after enjoying their beloved baths; and there are many delicate children and women, and men also, that would find marked improvement resulting from similar applications after enjoying a nineteenth-century bath.

A Plea.

Whilst there is abundant material for further observation and deduction, I feel that these pages should be sufficient to constitute *a plea for the general employment of oil at the toilet*. If the plea appeals successfully to the reader, the object of the writer is attained.















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